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COUNTRY

Germany (Soviet Zone)

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REPORT N

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Military Information from the Dessau Area.

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EVALUATION

PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED 27 August 1951

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REFERENCES

PAGES 2

ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 - sketch on ditto

REMARKS

REFERENCE COPY

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SOURCE

1. The components of the tank division from the Pionierschule, Dessau-Rosslau (M 52/E 17), had not returned from the troop training grounds by 10 August 1951. However, since virtually all of the windows of the installation were lighted, source inferred that recruits had arrived there. (1)
2. Troops were still observed in the engineer camp at the river training site near Rosslau. Troops continued to arrive there between 25 July and 10 August. They appeared to have been in active service for at least two or three years and, judging from their soiled uniforms, seemed to come directly from summer training camps. Source believed that they had attended courses in the handling of heavy bridge-building equipment at Rosslau. Intensive practice with heavy bridge-building equipment was observed in the area opposite Brambach, where source believed three units to be located, and opposite Rietzmeck, where two units appeared to be. Source no longer noticed the wooden pontoons previously used for the construction of two bridges. New engineer troops arrived at Rosslau on 23 July under the training program providing for 1-week training cycles.
3. A tank ferry of 12 units was noticed for the first time on 10 August. In addition, troops were seen constructing a bridge with 14 ferries. The fact that this took them four hours indicated that the soldiers were still below training standards. The Elbe River was blocked to shipping daily from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. between 25 July and 10 August. Up to three bridges were built across the river between Rietzmeck and Brambach on some days during this restricted period. The Soviet major at the waterways control office said that the last bridge-building practice would be held on 14 August. (2)
4. Engineer equipment resembling the former German 72 to 90-ton J-equipment, which was previously stored at the river training site near Rosslau, was used for the construction of an emergency bridge at Rosslau in May. A Soviet sergeant at the waterways control office stated that this bridge would have a load capacity of 72 tons. The engineer equipment at the training site near Rosslau was observed to be loaded on [redacted] at about 7 a.m. on 11 August. (3)

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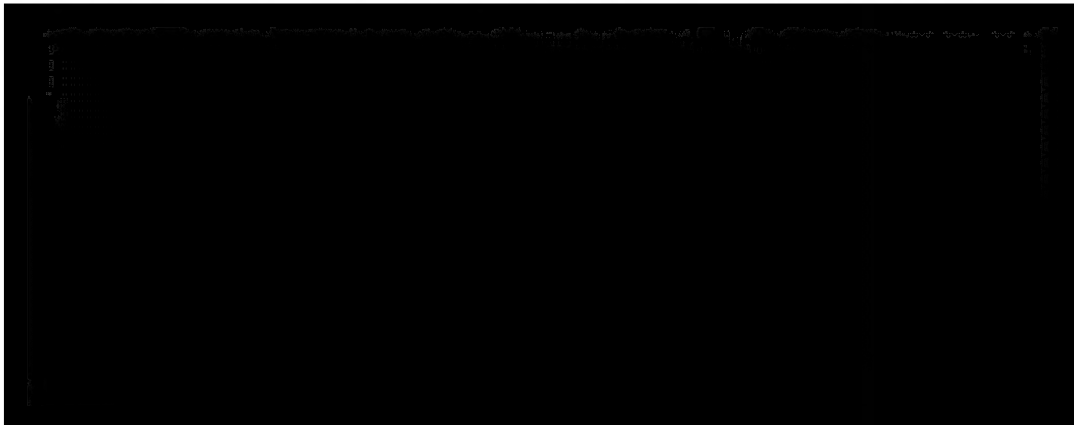
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5. An acquaintance of source stated that two trains went empty to Rossau on the evening of 1 August, allegedly having been unloaded in Dessau. Another empty train went to Rossau on 2 August, while a train with artillery pieces moved to Dessau. No specific information could be obtained. (U)

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Comments.

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- (1) The majority of the components of the 7th Gds Tank Div are still believed to be at Letzling Heath. [redacted] It has been observed several times that recruits in the Soviet Zone of Germany stayed at the posts to receive basic training while their units were at troop training grounds.
- (2) The information indicates that the training at the river training site near Rossau emphasized the handling of heavy bridge-building equipment. For a sketch of a 12-unit tank ferry, see Annex. The departure of troops on and after 1 August 1951, which had been interpreted as the end of the engineer exercises, is believed to have been only a rotation of units engaged in training.
- (3) Same source observed heavy bridge-building equipment, possibly of 16 to 100 ton model TMT pontoon park as early as 1 July 1951. [redacted] The equipment observed is believed to belong to the 36th Pon Bridge Regt of the GOFG in Rossau, which has vehicles with numbers of the [redacted]
- (4) The train movements were probably coincident to the rotation of units from the river training site near Rossau.
- (5) The vehicles seen in the Dessau-Rossau area belong primarily to the 7th Gds Tank Div and probably to the unidentified engineer regiment of the GOFG which recently moved from Potsdam to Bernburg. Individual vehicles belonged to the 9th Mecz Div and a headquarters unit of the 3d Gds Mecz Army.

1 Annex: Sketch

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